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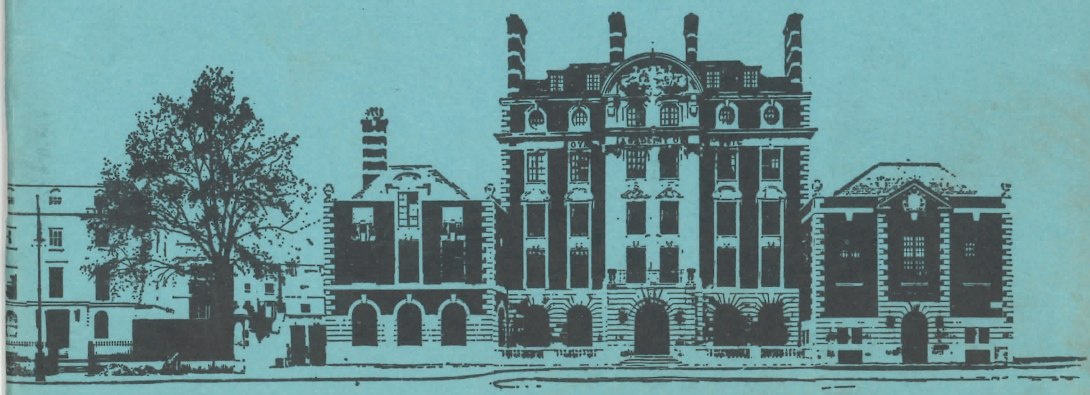
No 243 Spring 1987



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The Royal Academy of Music Magazine

Incorporating the Official Record of the RAM Club

Editor Robin Golding

No 243 Spring 1987

Royal Academy of Music
Marylebone Road, London NW1 5HT

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Editorial

The cuts and economies that the Academy has been forced to make since the Department of Education and Science 'froze' its annual grant in 1983 continue to have their effect. The retiring age for members of the professorial staff, previously extendable, by mutual agreement, to seventy-five, has now been reduced to sixty-five (despite the fact that many great teachers give of their best long after this); and the offer of facilities for early retirement to members of the staff over the age of fifty, announced recently, has caused some anxiety, particularly to professors who had come to believe that the establishment of Burnham FE-related salary scales (in 1980) had finally made them financially secure. (It should be emphasised that money raised by the Academy's Appeal cannot be used to implement the payment of regular staff.) One result of these cuts that made a strong impact on day-to-day life at the Academy was the decision not to appoint a new Librarian to replace Jane Harington, who took early retirement in July 1986; it meant that, since last September, the Library has had to restrict very severely its opening hours, to the great inconvenience of staff and students. The news that a new Librarian is to be appointed as from next September is therefore encouraging.

The Magazine goes to press just after the conclusion of the 'Messiaen Festival' (16–22 March), a week devoted to the doyen of French composers: 'Compositeur de Musique, Ornithologue et Rhytmicien', as he describes himself on his visiting card, 'the most original voice in French music since the death of Debussy' in the words of Felix Aprahamian. A full account will appear in the Summer Issue of the *Magazine*, but headlines of Press reviews, such as 'Catching up with the master', 'Messiaenic raptures', 'Climbing to the summit of Mount Messiaen', 'The master at large', 'Learning to love the twentieth century', 'The master of harmony', and 'A grand choir of celestial warblers', suggest that the event, enlivened by the active participation of the master himself, was an even greater triumph than previous 'festivals' at the Academy devoted to Lutoslawski, Tippett and Penderecki.

Angelina Goetz

Jane Harington

Anyone who has been into the Library reading rooms has passed the door of the Angelina Goetz Library, a special collection of full scores, mostly of nineteenth-century opera and orchestral works, together with the complete works of Mozart, Schubert and Schumann. Some of the scores are unique, having been specially prepared for the collection, and they were presented in half-leather bindings and in their own two bookcases. A copy of the portrait of Angelina Goetz by Sargent hangs outside in the library hallway.

The printed catalogue contains a brief reference to the background of Mrs Goetz and the circumstances of the gift to the Academy, but some enquiries from outside prompted me to try to find out more about the person who inspired what was even in 1903 such an astonishingly valuable memorial, and why in the RAM. 'Angelina', as she was known in musical circles, was born in 1830 or 1831, apparently the eldest of the six daughters and eight children of Joseph Moses Levy, who is known for being the first proprietor of *The Daily Telegraph*. Its founder, who had had a political aim, had failed to establish the paper, and J M Levy the printer bought it up, quickly making it extremely successful. According to Joseph Bennett, who was appointed music critic in 1870, it was 'the musical and dramatic parts of the paper . . . in which he took a particular interest', and Bennett

Angelina Goetz, from the portrait by John Singer Sargent
Geoffrey New Photographics

always felt confident that space and editorial support would be allotted to him.

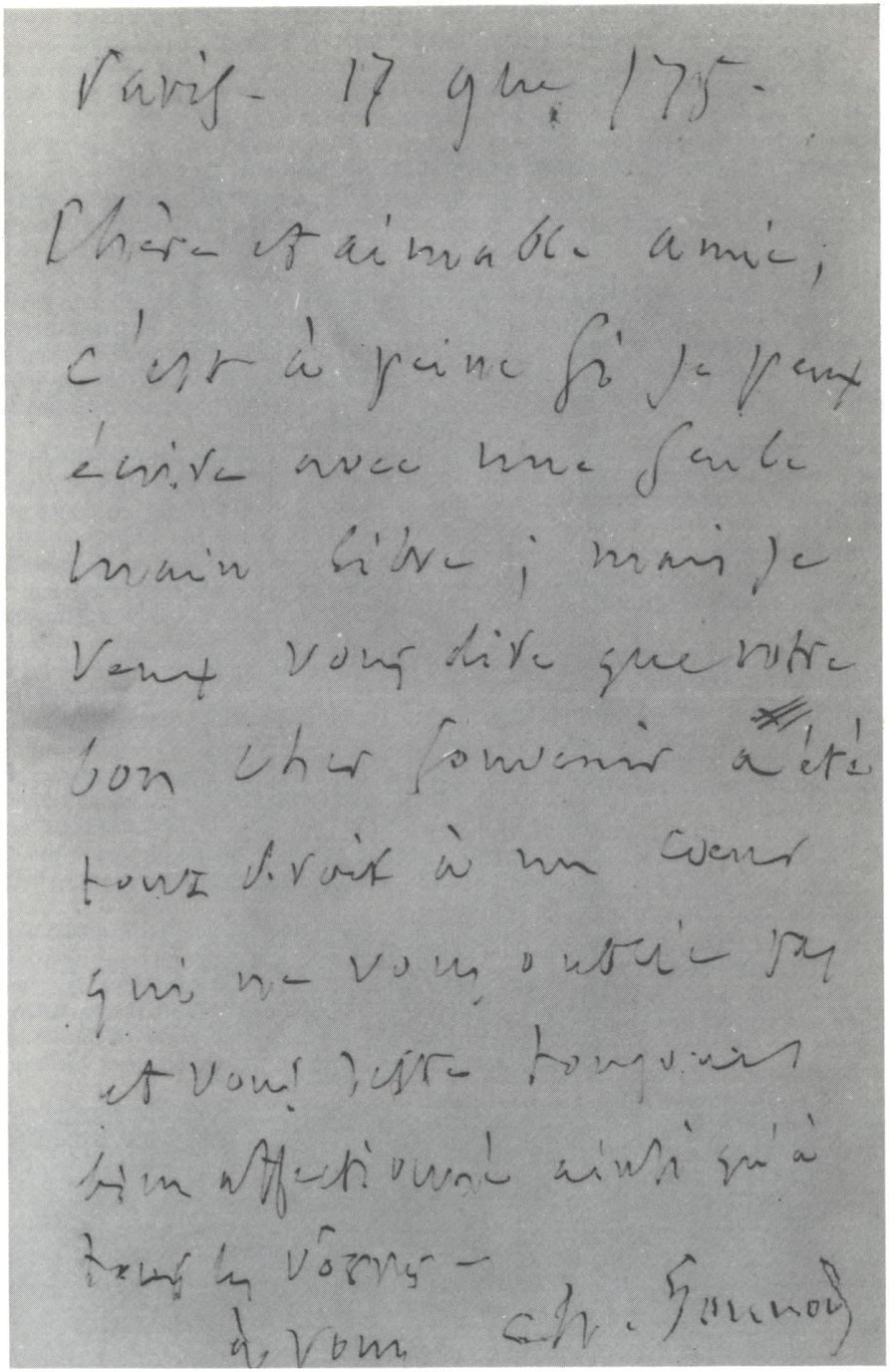
Levy was also a private patron of the arts, and of musicians in particular. He regularly held musical soirées in his house at Lancaster Gate, and his circle included Benedict, Tietjens and Patti among others. Clement Scott's obituary notice of Levy describes 'those memorable evenings ... when all was happiness, when sorrow had not set her black seal on this united family and its honoured head, and when those privileged to be present enjoyed the society of the most cultured and delightful form of Bohemianism that chance could throw together. What brilliant conversation at the dinner table, what beautiful music in the Drawing Room, contributed to be the genius of the day in every country, what cheery fun over the parting cigar, fell to the lot of those admitted to the great house in Lancaster Gate, whose walls even yet must echo with laughter and song!'

So Angelina was brought up in a household with a tradition of interest in music. Although no details of teachers or training have come to light, she clearly became a talented amateur pianist. On the occasion of a concert in 1856 for the benefit of the Cambridge Asylum for Soldiers' Widows, glowing reviews were published of Angelina's playing in music for two pianos by Osborne (with Simon Waley, another amateur pianist and composer, member of the Stock Exchange and a leading figure in the Jewish community of London, who had studied with Moscheles, Bennett and Osborne). The papers referred to 'a pianist to whom, young as she is, the epithet *promising* has ceased to be appropriate', who played 'with a perfect precision, dexterity and *ensemble* of effect, that put all qualification of "amateurship" wholly out of the question. ... Of "Angelina" it is but the barest justice to say that she occupies a foremost rank among the best lady pianists of the time; while, as a composer, she has a genius, a feeling for the highest attributes of her art, and an amount of technical power, that, quite unequalled among her own, may well be envied by most performers of the other sex.' Miss Dolby, a distinguished former Academy student from the 1830s, also sang at this concert.

As a result of her work for the Amateur Musical Society which promoted this among other concerts, Angelina was elected an Honorary Member, in acknowledgement of 'amateur performances of so high an artistic character'. But she did not play professionally.

One of the reviews quoted above mentions her compositions. Published works include several songs, an operetta called *A puff of smoke* which received several performances, and piano pieces among which was a *Marche funèbre, composed for the funeral of the late Duke of Wellington*. Sims Reeves wrote to her requesting a copy of a song he wished to sing in a recital. The Academy library houses a quantity of manuscripts by 'Angelina', many of them exercises and copies of other people's music, but including a piano concerto, violin and piano sonatas and songs.

The elder son of J M Levy, Sir Edward Levy-Lawson, who took on *The Daily Telegraph* after his father, was also noted for the family tradition of being a good host and giving pleasant social parties, a tradition which formed part of Angelina's own life when she had her own household in Palace Gardens Terrace after marrying Edward Goetz in 1859. This is proved by the contents of a scrapbook of letters she received, mostly from musicians, including Molique, Meyerbeer, Gounod, Rubinstein,

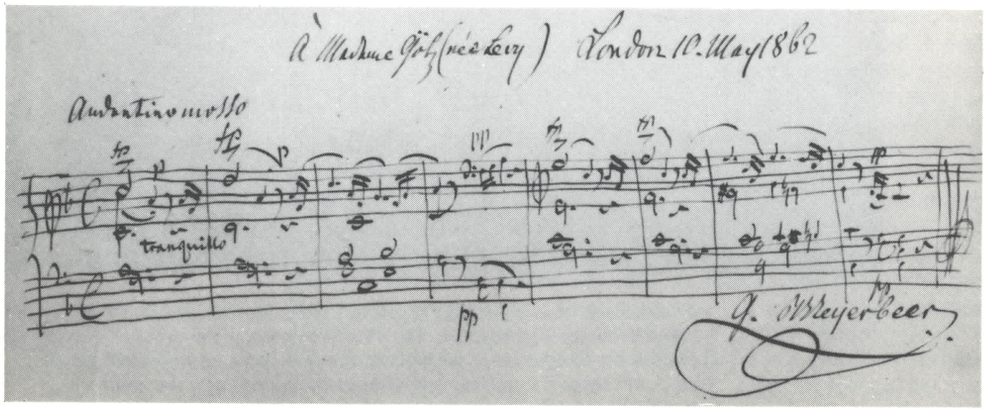

Paris - 17 9bre 75.
Chère et aimable amie,
c'est à peine si je peux
écrire avec une seule
main libre; mais je
veux vous dire que votre
bon cher souvenir a été
tout vivant à un coeur
qui ne vous oublie pas
et vous reste toujours
bien affectionné ainsi qu'à
tous les vôtres—
à vous
Ch. Gounod

A bread-and-butter letter to Angelina Goetz from Gounod. 'Paris 17 9bre/75. Chère et aimable amie, c'est à peine si je peux écrire avec une seule main libre; mais je veux vous dire que votre bon cher souvenir a été tout vivant à un coeur qui ne vous oublie pas et vous reste toujours bien affectionnément ainsi qu'à tous les vôtres—à vous, Ch. Gounod.'
Geoffrey New Photographics

Sullivan, Sir George Macfarren and many others. They generally refer to invitations from Mrs Goetz, and spread over the years 1844 to 1883, though most are from the 1850s. The album was recently on loan to the Academy for perusal and listing, and it brings us to the connection with the RAM.

One of Angelina's children was Ludovic Foster, a businessman like his father. Although his uncle Sir Edward Levy-Lawson had been a founder subscriber to the Royal College of Music in 1882, Ludovic Foster was elected to the Committee of Management of the RAM as part of the 'lay element' in 1897 and served till 1905. Then he was elected a Director on the Board in 1922, acting as honorary auditor for several years, and remaining on the Board until his death in 1942. He obviously inherited the interest in music, and he organised the gift of the Angelina Goetz Library by her children, and so 'perpetuated in a wider sphere the influence which she never failed to exercise in private life for the good of the art she loved'.

Ludovic Foster (the name was changed from Goetz at the time of the First World War) married in 1906 Muriel Foster, niece of the painter Birket Foster, and the famous contralto singer. She was already very well known for her performances of Elgar, especially in *The Dream of Gerontius* at Düsseldorf in the presence of Richard Strauss, who was inspired to say 'I raise my glass to the welfare and success of the first English Progressionist, Meister Edward Elgar' by the occasion. Muriel Foster is still remembered as the original contralto in *The Kingdom* and the original Mary Magdalene in *The Apostles.* Although at the time of her marriage the daily papers stated that she intended to retire into private life, she did later continue to perform in oratorio for a while after the war, until she became ill. A few scores which belonged to her are in the Academy library, mostly operatic vocal scores. However she did not sing in opera herself, considering that it would prostitute her art if she had to act at the same time. Her death in 1937 was reported as a news item by the BBC and all the papers.

It is Muriel Foster's son, the present Mr Ludovic Foster, who kindly lent Angelina Goetz's scrapbook and another relating to Muriel Foster which contains mementos of Elgar and several famous conductors. On Mr Foster's visit to the RAM we were delighted to find we had a printed copy of the song 'A child asleep', which Elgar wrote on the occasion of his first birthday, with the dedication 'This simple song (for his mother's singing) is made to Anthony Goetz (ae.l)'

A musical greeting from Meyerbeer (can you identify the tune?)
Geoffrey New Photographics

The Goetz Library was originally set up in Tenterden Street in what had been Walter Macfarren's teaching room, as he retired in 1903. On the move to Marylebone Road, it was placed in the present room 116 until it was possible to incorporate it properly into the new library provided under Sir Thomas Armstrong in 1967.

The myth of technique

(The eleventh annual Coviello Lecturé, given on 19 May 1986)

Christopher Elton

The myth of technique. Would that there *were* only one myth, and I sometimes fear that the more that is spoken and written on the subject the more it serves to confuse and perpetuate such myths. But there are some easily identifiable ones that are all patently untrue—although there is a germ of truth in each one that helps to keep it alive.

(1) What *is* Technique? To many it is equated almost exclusively with such matters as agility, velocity, accuracy and strength: physical pyrotechnics and gymnastics. I often have potential pupils—and I'm sure I am not alone in this—who say 'Well, I think I'm all right musically, but I know I have to improve my technique'. By this they mean that they would like to be able reliably to play more notes in as short a space of time as possible, more accurately, and perhaps louder.

(2) That 'technique' is somehow vulgar, that the idea of being a virtuoso is rather indecent and to be disapproved of. All slightly ungentlemanly—and especially not really English. (And definitely not Scottish!) That music is an art, and that if you develop physical skills too diligently you are reducing it to a craft. Of course this myth depends for its credibility on some of the false concepts in myth No. 1.

(3) That technique is of necessity complex.

To try to reassure you about the next hour, may I take this last point first and stress the patently obvious fact that our task as pianists or piano teachers is to find the simplest solution to all problems. Playing the piano *is* difficult, and unnecessary complications are most unwelcome. As I have already said, there is a risk some writings can add confusion and complexities. Gordon Green, a teacher I was devoted to and fortunate enough to study with for three years, told the story of the LRAM Teacher's candidate who, when asked to explain how to teach *cantabile* touch promptly came out with *'Cantabile* touch is a combination of First Species Finger Touch and Third Species Arm Touch in their Harmonitiated Form.' When asked what that meant he could only reply 'I don't know, but that's what t'says in't book'.

There *are* very worthwhile books on technique, I have no doubt, though the only ones I would unreservedly recommend are Neuhaus's *The Art of Piano Playing,* and Josef Lhevinne's *Basic Principles in Pianoforte Playing.* Both write so much that is essentially common sense, though the Neuhaus book delves much deeper.

'The more natural, the more comfortable, then the better' must surely be a fair maxim. And since every hand is far from identical, then the same solutions will not suit everyone, or even suit one person all his life (though there will always be some basic principles that must be adhered to).

The second of my myths is the cruellest to inflict on a musical pupil. Of course such things as agility and accuracy are essential.

It is self-evident that an inaccurate performance cannot be faithful to the composer's intentions, and hence not an artistic one, and the more awareness of the shortfall between the concept and the deed, the more frustration must build up. I have seen pianists who have been wonderfully stimulated in their understanding of the great literature we are privileged to have—and no other instrument is so fortunate—but who have eventually become depressed and disillusioned because the gulf merely widened between intent and achievement. Many of the things that I spoke disparagingly about when they were regarded as an end-product in themselves are, of course, very necessary ingredients in our pianistic armoury. Virtuosity is not something to be frightened of, for it is one facet of musical expression, and without it we are confined within narrower limits. For most of us there are times when we must practise such mundane matters as scales, finger exercises, octaves, etc. There are a few who possess such natural talents physically for the instrument that they hardly even know how they do what they do. But they are rare beings.

I remember Ogdon, just after he had won the Tchaikovsky Competition, coming to Edinburgh and being invited to speak to the class that Paul Badura-Skoda was taking. In an attempt to break the ice, Badura-Skoda commented on his envy of Ogdon's phenomenal double octave technique, and asked him if he could give the students a few hints. Ogdon sat down at the keyboard, tore off some stupendous double octaves, scratched his head in thought and said, 'I don't rightly know. I just put my hands down and let them run up!'

But to return to my first myth, may I quote Neuhaus: 'In order to speak and to be entitled to be heard, it is essential not only to know how to speak, but first of all to have something to say. It is as simple as twice two makes four, yet it is not difficult to show that hundreds and even thousands are constantly guilty of breaking this rule.'

There has surely never been an era when this is more relevant, for there is an astounding number of young pianists capable of tackling the highest peaks of pianistic virtuosity. Go to any international competition and one is bombarded by Chopin Études at phenomenal velocity and accuracy, and such works as *Islamey, Pictures at an Exhibition, Pétrouchka*, etc. are almost *de rigeur*. But it is when a player really *speaks* and tells you something new about the work played that one sits up and feels the stirrings of special interest.

Performance is about, primarily, the music; the 'artistic image', to borrow another phrase from Neuhaus. To play without respect for the composer is palpably unacceptable (and to play with real appreciation of the composer it is certain that one must not confine listening solely to piano works). But if that were all, then life would be very dull. Imagine a situation where there was only one acceptable interpretation of each work. No, the composition is there to permit, and even demand, a strong element of the performer as well, and this is why some artists have the ability to communicate an incredible freshness, and to make us feel as if we are hearing a well-known piece for the very first time.

Clearly the result of my first myth can only be empty bombast. I find it so depressing sometimes when I hear pianists in competitions who have evidently worked so hard to play capably in one sense, but who just cannot show *why* they ever wanted to undertake this very time-consuming activity, since what they are doing seems to be solely concerned with a physical capability, and so little with real musical penetration. Surely it must be the

driving wish to penetrate deeper into the music and to communicate this understanding to others that motivates us to develop the technical means, not simply a desire to be able to 'play the piano' as an end in itself.

If I was asked to say what I believe Technique is, I think it would be 'the ability to communicate the music being played through the medium of the piano' (the word does in fact come from the Greek word for Art). It therefore is evident that the more one knows exactly what one wants to say, the easier it is to work technically to that end. So much of the best practice done is a blend of 'technical' and 'musical' work. For those great musicians who can pick up a score and immediately *hear* the whole as they wish, then the practice is immediately focused on that end-product. Many of us, however, also have in practice to experiment with ideas, to try out different ways, a mixture of physical, intellectual and aural work to determine what we really like.

There are advantages and risks in this. I do believe that most pianists would benefit from doing much more of their study away from the piano. Unless we are both very aware and have clear objectives there is a danger that once at the keyboard our own physical tensions and technical difficulties can start to dictate our 'interpretation'. In other words things develop, not because that is what we have planned, but because that is what we find it easiest to do. You all know how easy it is, if a plausible mis-reading has occurred, to come to 'hear' that note as right. In the same way a certain phrasing, sound or texture can insinuate its way into our performance by sheer force of habit.

On the other hand it is surely not good to predetermine every detail before setting fingers on the piano. A closed mind is an unimaginative mind, and thus an inartistic one. Also totally repetitive practice is stultifying to anyone, or should be. The ear should always be assessing what is happening, and the mind constantly open and 'enquiring'.

What I *am* saying, though, is that certain criteria must be decided before we can possibly know *how* to practise technically. At the crudest level it is necessary to know whether to aim to play *legato* or *staccato* (which is not to say that both may not come into our practice), or whether to play loud or soft. If we are playing a work by Haydn, then our whole physical approach will be different from that in a work by Brahms or Bartók. These are obvious examples, but ones that are capable of infinite refinement.

I always remember when I was a student here, a colleague (not really a friend!), who was a cellist, coming up to me to ask if I would run through the Dvořák Concerto with him. He was one of the type of students who does love to 'play through' to others, rather than working on his own, but he was gifted in many ways. I did so and he asked me what I thought of his playing—always a dangerous question to pose, especially to someone who enjoys teaching! I told him, truthfully, that I was impressed with much of it, but wondered why he went so much slower in certain places.

'Oh', he answered, 'that's my soul. I feel it has to go that way.' In fact he was fooling only himself, for all the passages mentioned were the hardest parts. He had originally learned the piece when very young, and then his technique had not enabled him to play these parts at speed. But now that he could do so, he was under the illusion that some guidance from within or from on high inspired the shifts of pulse!

In fact, when we talk of technique, one of the most vital things

we have to learn is the technique of *practice.* Most of us, and I certainly number myself as one of the majority, learn how to practice far too late. If this does happen then the only hope is that we can help others to avoid our own mistakes sooner. This thought leads me to break off for a moment to digress about the role of the teacher.

I find it a wonderfully stimulating task, but also a frighteningly responsible one. I think that one of the hardest things is to know how far to guide, and how much to leave to the individuality of the pupil. Of course, this must vary vastly between different pupils, depending both on their ability to find their own solutions, and of their receptiveness to suggestion. When I spoke of the futility of constant unbending repetition of a pre-conceived idea one has formed, that is certainly preferable to equally mindless repetition of an idea that has come from a teacher. At least the first has some originality, and if wrong offers the chance to learn from one's own mistakes.

If I may quote Neuhaus once more: 'It has always seemed self-evident to me that the first duty of any teacher is to make his pupil independent as quickly as possible.' Very well put, and I remember that Gordon Green was always one who was quite unashamed and generous if any of his pupils wished to 'move on' elsewhere. I believe that at the Academy we are beginning to benefit from a more natural interchange of pupils. Why, after all, should someone come here and only gain from the experience and knowledge of *one* of all the faculty? Of course some regularity of supervision is needed, but this should not preclude being exposed to several influences.

To return to the matter of practice. The overlap of technical and musical should always be there, and the more talented the student the harder it is to make a discernible dividing line between the two. I find that rhythm—surely the most critical facet of music—is also a great aid to practice. The stronger one feels a sense of rhythm the more one realises just exactly where to place each note and how to articulate it. In other words, without precise control of fingerwork it must be impossible to play absolutely rhythmically, but at the same time the spur to do so is the best possible focus to the technical work needed. (I am taking it for granted that by 'rhythm' we do not mean just a series of regular notes with metronomic accents. Rhythm is so much finding the absolute placing and direction of *every* note, especially the 'inside' of beats).

Of course, much of our practice should be slow. (I remember to my shame the occasion when I was old enough to know better, and my teacher in Edinburgh exhorted me to practise a certain passage slowly. 'Do you mean my slowly or yours?' I was naïve enough to ask.

I think that the older I get the slower my idea of slow practice. This must not mean slow-witted or lethargic work; on the contrary the mind must be active to anticipate and 'explore' musically, and the ear alert and critical. Slow practice also has its hazards, quite apart from the futility of dull-minded repetition. I suspect we all know what it is like to suddenly realise that we have been repeating a passage for several minutes without concentrating. That must be the signal to stop and take a break, for it is just as possible to 'unpractise' as to improve. The memory is not selective, and whatever we do makes its impression, whether it is right or wrong. (That is one reason why one must resist the temptation to keep 'trying out' a difficult passage to see

if it will 'work'.) There is also the risk that we work in a way that is possible slowly, but impossible fast. For example we can use large, cumbersome movements in what must eventually be a finger passage, or negotiate leaps without the flexibility that is needed at speed. Again, fast *arpeggio* passages do not require, and are indeed hampered by, a binding *legato* at the change of hand position, and we can practise an irrelevant movement.

But at its best slow practice offers the chance to develop the feeling of what the passage feels like when it is 'unpressurised', matching the physical movements to the musical concept, and thus to spot any tensions which may come in later. Of course in performance one will often put in that extra ounce of effort that gives excitement and immediacy and even the sense of risk, and this means some tensions. That is one reason why most of us need to practise slowly in between performances). The better one knows a piece, and knows one *can* play it, the less need there is to play always at speed.

Technique is, on any musical instrument, about producing sound. But so often pianists seem to relegate work on tone far down the scale of priorities: a kind of last luxury. Surely we are the only instrumentalists of whom this could be said. I suspect that it comes from the fact that, while obviously a violinist, wind player or singer is immediately faced with the problem of producing any acceptable tone, that seems easy to the beginner at the piano. 'All you have to do is to press the key down!' It may seem a 'mechanical' instrument, yet we all know that the hallmark of a great player is often his quality of sound. Sit in for a few hours on any audition panel and you will hardly credit that all that variety of different wonderful and distressing sounds could actually come from the same instrument.

So many of our difficulties stem from the fact that playing the piano involves a series of vertical movements, the aim of which is to produce a horizontal line. The instrument is incapable of the kind of perfect *legato* sound that the human voice can sustain. This is a limitation we must acknowledge, but never accept, constantly striving to create the illusion that every note does not die away from the moment it is struck. But in compensation the range of sounds, colour, articulation, etc. at our disposal is almost limitless. I never hear *Pictures at an Exhibition* in the orchestral version without marvelling at how limited, lack-lustre and monochrome it sounds in comparison with the original. The chatter of *The Market Place at Limoges,* the shiver of the tremolos in *Catacombs,* the ponderous weight of *Bydlo,* or the massive tolling bells in *The Great Gate of Kiev* are all so much more vivid on the piano.

If we accept that work on tone is an absolute fundamental of technical work, then it is also immediately apparent that this work is impossible without a well-developed ear and without musical and spiritual qualities. I do feel that the first essential is to be able to create beauty of tone, but a seductive *cantabile,* however pleasing, will quickly cease to endear if it is the only tone-quality we have to live with. One must resist the temptation to wallow in the sheer sensuousness of sound to the exclusion of the dry, the powerful, the percussive, the shrill. Would one describe the Horowitz sound as 'beautiful'? But it is none the less capable of both thrilling and moving us. (Having heard him again since giving this talk I might have to review that last remark in view of the new and growing warmth that gives a different, but equally amazing quality to his playing.)

For the development of a pure *cantabile* and linear playing I

think nothing is more valuable than contrapuntal playing. The control of *legato*, of independent lines (and hence of independent fingerwork) and the aural and intellectual awareness it involves are essential training. Of course much of this work is through the works of Bach, but once learned and appreciated, this can be applied to so much other music. One of the most salutary lessons I ever had was my first from Maria Curcio, a very fine teacher. I had brought the Chopin F sharp major Impromptu, somewhat anxious about the octave leaps, and fast demi-semiquaver passages. The first hour was spent on the opening eight bars, a series of crotchets in two voices written for left hand solo. At the end of the hour I still could not play it reliably, but at least I *realised* that I could not play it: always the first step (and sometimes a painful one!). I also had a knowledge of how to practise it to acquire the result needed.

Playing the piano necessitates finding the right combination of firmness and relaxation. We all know that weak fingers and stiff wrists are a recipe for pianistic disaster. (And, of course, anxiety about the former leads one to 'compensate' by 'pushing' tensely.) Thus, we often hear from the same person both the extremes of a 'thin' soft tone that lacks focus and projection, and of a harsh *forte* sound which borders more on noise than tone. (I like Lhevinne's description of the wrist as the pianist's 'shock absorber'.)

Given the right physical balance the pianist can and must search for the widest range of sounds possible, and when one speaks of tone production that must also include the technique of pedalling. There is surely nothing that makes such an immediate difference to our sound as the presence or absence of pedal, yet the infinite subtleties this can involve are so often grossly neglected.

Rubinstein described the pedal as 'the soul of the piano'. Busoni, used somewhat more flowery language, referring to it as 'moonlight streaming down on a landscape'. Neuhaus reminds us of Liszt's only indication regarding pedal in his *Tannhäuser* transcription: 'It is assumed that the pedal will be used with understanding'.

'Would you like to try the piano?' one invites exam candidates, and they tear up and down a scale (usually C major). The more enlightened may try some soft sounds to 'feel' the action. But how often do they 'feel' the action of the pedal (which is likely to be prone to vastly greater variation) to find that crucial spot where the dampers first begin to leave the strings? (There should, after all, be no difficulty about simply putting it fully down or up.)

Any judgement about working on tone must involve thought about pedal (even if only a conscious decision *not* to use it!). Almost as a string player will decide whether to use *vibrato*—and, to continue the analogy, choose the speed of *vibrato*—so the pianist will judge the generosity and depth of pedal. I often wish that there were no way for editors to indicate pedalling. (I say 'editors' deliberately, for the insight we get from some composers' markings is invaluable. And how fascinating it is to try to translate Beethoven's long pedals or Haydn's 'open pedal' markings into twentieth-century nine-foot Steinway terms.) But to try to indicate *finesse* of pedalling on a rigid down/up basis borders on artistic imbecility. Apart from anything else, it will depend so much on the performer: the touch, tone, and texture produced, and on the acoustics of the hall, which will have to be re-assessed when there is an audience. It is often the case that those who are afraid to pedal their classical music are also the

same people who envelop their Debussy in a cloudy, opaque haze. Hardly surprisingly, since both indicate a lack of skill.

A word also must be said about the use of *una corda*, which is at times treated by some as a reassuring prop for inadequate control, or even regarded as something akin to cheating. But it *is* an integral part of the instrument, there to be used when we deem it fit. Obviously it must not be the regular aid to every *diminuendo*, but for the creation of a change of *colour* (not necessarily for just softer sounds) it can be so valuable. Personally, I am very fond on some Steinways of the particular beauty of a soft melody played *mezzo forte* with *una corda.*

This talk has been, deliberately, largely about the 'concept' of technique, rather than the practical development of specific skills. But, while it would be out of place (and impossible) to give a comprehensive and detailed analysis of technical problems and training here, it is perhaps appropriate to draw a few conclusions.

The study and development of the physical aspects of playing the piano are quite fascinating. As in other aspects of study one has to keep an ever-enquiring and searching mind. The hand is such a marvellously manoeuvrable instrument, and every individual has to learn how to extract the full pianistic potential of his individual hand. It has an infinite range of strengths and flexibilities which may be used in different conjunctions to produce different results.

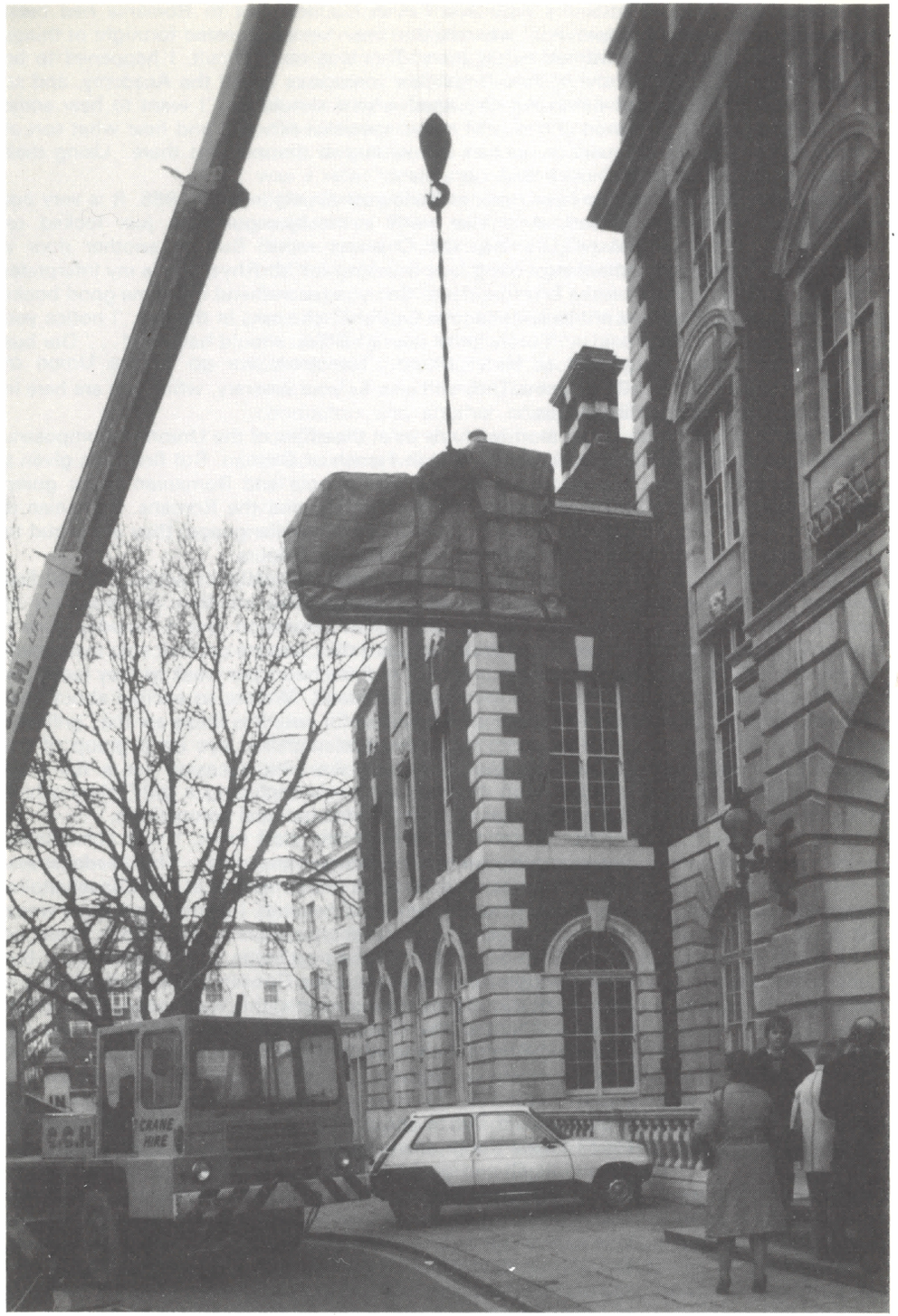
There is nothing dull about either teaching or practising technique, especially when through it one can widen the parameters of musical performance, and through new physical abilities open new musical gateways. Ultimately the controlling 'centre' of our work is the brain. I often use with students the analogy of the conductor of an orchestra. The pianist needs to dissociate himself from the physical activity of the actual playing, and feel able to direct operations as a conductor would, summoning from fingers, wrist, etc. sounds in the same way that a Karajan will demand sounds from a player or section of the orchestra.

That is why the pianist must have the same knowledge of the score, understanding the structure, the tensions, the 'inner pulse' of the music. Often a lack of such awareness will also make a passage virtually impossible to play. I remember the other day teaching a Rachmaninov *Étude-Tableau* to a student who had announced that he got so stiff and tired that he could not get through it. That was hardly surprising since he was trying to play every note *fortissimo* in several places. This may have been a misconception, a lack of conception (not the same thing) or some masochistic, guilt-ridden fear that if he could not play it in the hardest way possible he would be exposed as some kind of inadequate technical cheat. (I don't entirely joke, for it is easy to believe that a certain passage must be difficult, rather than trying to make it as easy as possible without compromising the musical result.) But once the score had been viewed more objectively and the need for rhythmic pointing, melodic outlines and clear textures been seen, the passage was actually playable. (And of course even if the original objective had been attained physically, it would have been a hideous cacophony of notes battling against each other.)

So, there we have the symbiotic relationship (an entirely healthy one) between technique and musical thought. Each needs the other, and each feeds the other. Of course it is not simple. And even then it is not enough. There is still that indefinable quality and that individual genius that are the

hallmark of the great performing artist, the great communicator. Most of us will never get there, but it is *so* worthwhile trying to go as far along that road as possible.

A Bösendorfer model 290SE concert grand piano was installed in the Barbirolli Room in the Academy after its successful showing in the Sir Jack Lyons Theatre on 27 and 28 January. This instrument, the result of the combined skills of Viennese craftsmanship (a Bösendorfer Imperial) and American technology, can reproduce with remarkable exactness the performances of those who play on it. It is not just a question of notes and time: dynamics, expression, and, above all, instrumental colour are reproduced. The computer measures minutely the action of the hammers and the movement of the pedals as well. A training programme has already been inaugurated so that students will be able to employ this important teaching aid to their advantage. Those who have already used it have been impressed by its effectiveness (Alexander Kelly writes).
Above: *Jung-Won Chae at the keyboard and Jeremy Allen at the controls*
Right: *The 290SE being hoisted by crane to the Barbirolli Room on the first floor*
Photographs by Suzie E Maeder



A musician in Romania

Stephen Rhys

After my proposed British Council visit to Romania had been approved, I was asked to draw up a suggested fortnight of things I wanted to do there. This was not difficult. I happened to be showing two Romanian composers round the Academy, and so at lunch we discussed what I should do. 'I want to hear some good choirs, visit music specialist schools, and hear what sort of music composers are writing at the moment there.' Using their advice, I drew up a plan.

So here I am, at Bucharest airport in May 1986. It is very hot indeed. A soldier with a machine-gun has just locked us passengers into the Customs room. But, at another door a charming young lady is asking for Mr Rhys; she is my interpreter for the first four days. 'Can you recommend me some good books with really colloquial English?', she asks in the bus. 'I notice you said . . . Surely that's not right? You should have said . . .' Our bus arrives at Hotel Union. 'Tomorrow we go to the Union of Composers. They will give us your itinerary, while you are here in Bucharest.'

Next morning finds us at the office of the Union of Composers. Conversation is now in French or German. But first I am given a twenty-minute history of Romania and Romanian music going back to the time of the Dacians and the Romans. Romanian is claimed to be a Latin—not a Slav—language; they are proud to be a little different from their neighbours.

The school for musically-talented children which I visited first has a headmistress in charge. The children are from six to eighteen. They have a normal education, but it includes quite a lot of Theory and Aural, and their lessons on their solo instrument progress from one hour to three hours per week as they reach the final year at the age of eighteen. 'We are so excited about your visit. We have a lot prepared for you. Yes these are the "grillons" (little crickets)', she exclaims, with her eye on a group of the younger children. My visit was the occasion for a full-scale concert, with choirs at all levels, including a girls' choir which had won prizes in a French international competition.

After the concert, back in the staff room, I was immediately impressed by the strong family atmosphere. The headmistress, fully in charge, and herself a piano teacher at the Conservatoire, was proud of each member of her staff. I learned that there was a constant whittling down of the numbers at the school. There are only 200 or so students at the next stage, the Conservatoire. But once through the final exam at the Conservatoire every student is assured of a job. They were surprised this was not so in the West.

When I visited the Conservatoire it was largely to hear the 'Madrigal Choir' conducted by Marin Constantin. This choir has been in existence thirty years and Constantin is the motivating genius behind it. 'By law, we must rehearse four hours a day. Well, I would like to show you some of my rehearsal methods. First I tackle the problem of blend.' The whole choir sang softly on middle C, and gradually notes were added above and below. 'The second problem is response to the conductor.' The choir was split into two groups, and the volume was increased on one side and decreased on the other, in opposition or in agreement. Quickly an atmosphere of intense listening was established. For some of the exercises he handed over routines to proud members of the choir. Then there were three performances all by heart. He included 'Fire! Fire!' by Dowland, and a modern Romanian piece by a colleague at the Conservatoire, which was electrifyingly exciting. This was choral singing at a very high level.

I spoke about the quality of this choir to Kevin McGuinness over a lunch at the British Embassy (salmon flown out from England, and strawberries and cream already, in May, in the market). He kindly suggested the British Council might be willing to sponsor a visit by Constantin to England; it would be too expensive to arrange a tour for the whole choir.

The intense heat in May had been a little premature; there were some thunderstorms and a sudden drop in temperature, which was a relief for me, as I had been finding it too hot to sleep at night. Every public concert was incorporated into my fortnight's programme. There was considerable excitement because the Philharmonic Orchestra from Cluj-Napoca (300 miles to the north-west), under their conductor Mandeal, was paying Bucharest a once-in-five-years' visit. Their orchestral manager was Adrian Pop, who was one of the two composers I had met at the RAM. It was a relief to find someone I actually had met before; and incidentally he spoke English well, a rest from the continual French and German. I was introduced to several conductors and another composer, Grigoriu ('our best living composer'). 'Are you the best living composer in Romania?', I asked, with a twinkle. 'Perhaps', he said, rising to the occasion. 'I tell you a little joke. Isaac Stern was asked, "Who is the best violinist in the world?" He replied: "I don't know, but I am the second best!"'

Each public concert in Romania must, by law, open with a contemporary piece written by a Romanian. 'We have built up', said Grigoriou, 'about six hundred pieces suitable for opening concerts with. But our conductors are not good with modern music.' This was an unfair comment. While Mandeal was more at home with big Romantic pieces, the orchestra's other conductor, Emil Simon, had given a large number of twentieth-century pieces their first performances. Later I was able to listen to Mandeal rehearsing his orchestra in his home town. There was a good relationship between himself and the players. He literally 'swam in the music', rarely stopping. His intentions were abundantly clear. If I might criticise at all, he rarely achieved a really soft dynamic. The intonation of the orchestra was good (I later heard some bad intonation in opera orchestras). The rhythm, of course, was exceptional: we were in a Slav country. When I came round to congratulate Mandeal, after the Bucharest concert, the heat emanating from his whole body could be felt before one even reached the hand one was about to shake. Each orchestra (there are fourteen professional orchestras in Romania) has two conductors. By contract each conductor must conduct twenty-four concerts annually; after that, they are free to conduct abroad. 'Concerts', Adrian Pop told me, 'are fairly well attended' (I, in fact, attended several which were *not*). 'If one wants a concert to go really well, one needs a good soloist—preferably one from Moscow. But one can't afford this all the time.' Adrian Pop had spent a lot of his visit in England, discussing the present situation with English orchestral managers.

After four days I changed interpreter. I now had a lady whose brother had defected to the West. He had joined a West German orchestra. We took a night train to Cluj-Napoca. The German name of the town, Klausenburg, reminds one of the number of times this part of the world has changed hands. Transylvania has been under the Hungarians, has been part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. It is a rich part of the country, with gold and other minerals. I was immediately happier in this town. The houses were coloured pink, blue, yellow and white. They were not so tall as in the centre of Bucharest, where they often reached

Pen and ink drawing by Julia Rhys

six to seven stories. Cluj boasts two opera houses—one Romanian and one Hungarian—and a concert hall besides.

Here again, I spent much time in the Music Specialist School, which was set in an old monastery. I had arrived in time for the final 'Recital Diplomas'. Each pupil, aged eighteen, was required to play for half an hour. I listened to pianists and violinists. It was the same music as they would play for the entrance to the Conservatoire. The pianists played a Bach prelude and fugue, part of a Beethoven sonata, and a long, testing piece by Liszt. One eighteen-year-old pianist, who was also being prepared for an International Festival in Budapest, had a quite phenomenal stamina. 'No good at academic studies', said his teacher. I also listened to a lot of violinists. Their intonation was good. They each played two Wieniawski Caprices (Op 18 Nos 2 and 4), two solo Bach movements, and a movement (or two) from a concerto (Paganini No 1, Mendelssohn, Saint-Saëns No 3 were the commonest choices). I also had a bit of fun attending aural classes, and helping with the English language classes. As a rich reward I sometimes got a 'Good morning' or 'Hullo, how are you?' from a child when I was wandering round the town by myself. The double-bass teacher was proud to show me an experiment—he had devised a small-sized double-bass, and two twelve-year old boys sawed through some studies. This was an early age to start the instrument. 'Adesso' said the headmaster, 'un altro sperimento'. His second language was Italian. We retired to his study, locked the door and opened a bottle of plum vodka, which was followed by strong coffee. 'Well, what do you think of our school?' I am again impressed by the family atmosphere amongst the staff. The vitality and spontaneity is Italian, but there is a seriousness mixed in, an attractive mixture. Later the staff asked me about my feelings on religion. There are 350 churches in Bucharest, and I am not sure how many in Cluj. Their opinion was that religion today should not alter as regards its form. Society was changing so fast that people needed something unchanging to hold on to. Perhaps the situation in the West was not the same.

That evening I attended a meeting of Romanian composers. Romeo Ghircoiashiu, their President, welcomed me in English. I was delighted to hear 'Splendid, splendid', complete with the original intonation, and later to find Sir Anthony Lewis's name in the Visitors' Book. At the meeting were composers Vasile Herman, Adrian Pop, Dan Voiculescu, Terenyi Ede, Timayu and Tudor Jarda. We agreed to conduct the meeting in French. Ghircoiashiu, introducing the meeting, divided twentieth-century composers into three main groups. Those born in the last century, such as Enesco and Toduta, who were the teachers of today's teachers; today's teachers (aged 40–60), and the younger generation (aged 20–40) which included my friend Adrian Pop. I was played music from all three groups. I was particularly impressed by Toduta, about whom I had previously known nothing. I wish I could say more about the other composers, but space is limited. Their music had been influenced by Bartók, by Serialism, by Webern, by a reaction against Webern. All composers were influenced in one way or another by the inherent strength of Romanian folk music.

One composer who treated me with great kindness and friendship was Dan Voiculescu. His teacher had been Toduta, of whom he spoke with respect, almost reverence. Toduta had produced some fine analyses of the works of great composers, particularly Bach, and he (Voiculescu) had followed in his

Pen and ink drawing by Julia Rhys

master's footsteps, producing several anthologies of examples. These anthologies had been published by the Conservatoire. I felt we might find them useful in London. I was particularly struck by the care with which the examples had been chosen. He had selected some of the finest moments for closer scrutiny, a task which, without experience, a student would find impossible. He and Terenyi Ede also treated me to a specimen composition lesson with two pupils. This was conducted in German, and I admired the two girl students who accepted the language problems without a tremor.

In Cluj I went to I don't know how many operas in one week. It is a constant problem for singers to transfer to the other opera house and re-learn a rôle in Hungarian, or *vice-versa.* My interpreter had a great feeling for vocally relaxed tone, and seemed to know all the singers in Romania. At our hotel we would often have two or three of them in our rooms, laughing at the usual situations which afflict those connected with opera, from the topless dancers in the opening of *Tannhäuser* to the stabbed baritone in *The Tales of Hoffmann,* who spent twenty minutes upside down at the end of a bed before the curtain finally closed.

The history of Romania's relationships with its neighbours, particularly Russia and Hungary, is not altogether a happy one. There were some appalling stories of Hungarian atrocities during the last war. It is particularly moving to hear, therefore, of Transylvanian schools where both Hungarian and German are the educational languages to cater for the population minorities.

My visit ended with two days in Bucharest again. It had been a very full and interesting time. I felt a responsibility to spread some of my newly-acquired information. I have not mentioned the duller moments, of course. The food was not particularly good. The waiters were bored. Socialism, like Capitalism, has its disadvantages. I have tried to extract the exciting moments, and there were plenty of them. Amongst my parting presents was a huge box of gramophone records, which the Customs lady allowed on the aeroplane without weighing it.

Forty years of the LBS

Paul Steinitz

1987 will mark two milestones in the history of my London Bach Society. The first will be the completion of the project started in 1958 of performing all J S Bach's 208 extant cantatas using professional orchestras and soloists. Such a project will never have been achieved in this country before, and possibly never before in the world outside Germany, since the time of Bach. In the 1930s the BBC series was not quite complete and the late Professor Whittaker's great achievement was accomplished with student forces. A few of the cantatas have been given by us in recording studios (both commercial and BBC), but nearly all have been presented in public performances.

The second milestone will be that in 1987 the London Bach Society will have existed and worked with me following broadly the same artistic policy for forty years. This may not be unique, but it is certainly unusual.

The relevance of this to the RAM is that when I formed the Society during the winter of 1946/7 I based it on keen and capable RAM students of mine (I was appointed to the staff in 1945), selected members of the choir of the church in Dulwich were I was then organist, and successful applicants for membership from people who had seen some posters we put

around South London. I say 'successful applicants' because I have always insisted on admission by audition.

The series of cantatas is important to me not only because of the mere achievement of such a unique project, but rather the revelation it has made to the listening public and to performing musicians of Bach's extraordinary genius: I mean the fertility of his invention of a wealth of marvellous tunes, the number of wholly original instrumental and instrumental plus vocal combinations of sound he thought of, as well as his amazing technical ability—which has of course been known for many years through such works as *The Art of Fugue,* the *Musical Offering* and many others. The cantata project will be completed in six concerts, which started on 29 November 1986 and will finish in December 1987. Of these, that which is planned for 20 May is the 'Birthday' concert, for it was in May and June 1947 that the first four public concerts given by the LBS took place. The 20 May programme, at the QEH, will reflect the long connection the Society has enjoyed (since 1959) with Dame Janet Baker, who sings the solo cantata BWV 169; it also reflects the policy it has held since the late fifties of including a twentieth-century work in its Bach programmes by giving Stanley Glasser's *The Chameleon and the Lizard,* an Arts Council commission for our 1973 USA tour.

Another London Bach Society event connected with the RAM should be mentioned. In 1952 we gave the first performance in England of Bach's *St Matthew Passion* complete and in German and with the corrections which had recently been made to the old *Bach-Gesellschaft* score; this was made possible through the help and encouragement of that great Bach scholar the late Walter Emery. Walter was a student with me at the RAM as was William Cole. I mention Dr Cole since he has played the organ continuo in every performance of the Bach Passions I have given in London, the provinces and abroad (in Italy he played both the organ parts!). So 1987 will also mark another event for us: it will mark thirty-five years of annual Bach Passion performances: thirty-three of the *St Matthew,* and three of the *St John,* two of which were in the wonderful 1725 version.

Obituary

Godfrey James Barton 1920–86

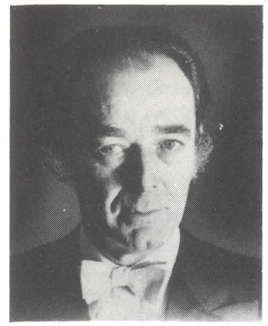
Christopher Regan

Godfrey James Barton was born on 17 February 1920, and died in August 1986. He entered RAM in September 1946, after service with the Royal Army Medical Corps, and won the Lady Wallis Bridge Prize in 1947 and the Henry W Richards Prize in 1949. His first job was as Assistant Music Master at Uppingham School, for one year. From there he moved to Durlston Court Preparatory School, and in 1956 he became Director of Music at Archville College, Harrogate. He retired in 1980 but remained active in local musical circles. He was a kind and courteous teacher and friend, and was able to demand and obtain high standards of effort and achievement from all those with whom he came into contact.

Maurice Handford 1928–86

Sir Thomas Armstrong

Maurice Handford, who died in hospital on 16 December, was struck down by illness just as he was coming into the full maturity of his powers. Older people will remember him as a great horn player in the Hallé Orchestra under Barbirolli, who urged him to seek a career as a conductor and gave him ungrudging support when he decided to take that difficult step. It was from Barbirolli that Handford learned a wide repertory, and the



techniques of rehearsal and concert conducting: much of 'glorious John's' own style and method survived in his pupil, and I can testify, from personal knowledge, that Barbirolli regarded Handford as his natural heir and successor.

Handford's experience after about 1965 became comprehensive and international, and it is to be regretted that he never assumed control of one of the great national orchestras with which he was so often associated as a guest conductor. If he had had good health for another five years this might have been remedied. But too often it was the case of 'is not this the carpenter's son?', and some foreigner was preferred, for no good reason except that Handford did not enjoy the support of those operators who control from their offices the international music market.

Long after Handford's fine performances are forgotten his influence will survive because of his work with the students in the Royal Academy of Music's First Orchestra, which he directed for many years and brought to a high level of excellence. He carried on this work until the last days of his life in a defiant and exemplary fight against pain and increasing weakness. No young musician who played in those last rehearsals will ever forget Handford's farewell to the masterpieces that he had played so often, knew so intimately and loved so passionately. They will never forget Maurice Handford.

Martin Milner

My first acquaintance with Maurice Handford was some thirty-five years ago, at Rayson Whalley's house in Manchester, where we met to play the Brahms horn Trio. Our friendship was immediate, and withstood many years of close co-operation. As principal horn in the Hallé, Maurice ran his section with complete authority. He achieved this largely through the example he set with his excellent playing. In terms of complete reliability and level of musicianship he could well be mentioned in the same breath as the great Dennis Brain, whose playing I knew well from years before in the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

Maurice's burning ambition to become a conductor gave me some concern: to lose such a fine principal horn seemed a great shame, but as a conductor he soon proved himself. He had been preparing for years for this step and the high quality of his musicianship and ability for very hard work brought immediate results. He learned from his mentor, Sir John Barbirolli, who gave him much encouragement and support. Maurice was far too much of an individual to become a carbon copy of the great man. His restrained, economical but impassioned performances reminded one more of Sir Adrian Boult and the vastly underrated Leslie Heward. As Associate Conductor of the Hallé, his upgrading of programmes rivalled the content of the more prestigious Thursday series. Also in this capacity he championed young soloists who had still to make their name. He pioneered contemporary works, and although composers were invited to hear the final rehearsal, he would listen to their comments but, sometimes to our amusement, he kept them firmly under control.

Maurice's career expanded and he did much conducting abroad, having a permanent post as conductor-in-chief at Calgary in Canada. As Conductor of the First Orchestra at the RAM he did more for training young orchestral musicians and preparing them for the profession than anyone else in the country. His influence was such that it will continue to bear fruit for many years to come.

His friendships were not transient and he had a strong sense of loyalty. I know we all mourn his passing at far too early an age, as he still had much to offer, but although we are deprived of the complete fulfilment of his life's work, there is much to look back on with great pleasure and satisfaction. After the fight, may he rest in a well deserved peace.

William Golightly

In Maurice Handford we remember one of the great choral conductors. In the Hallé Choir we remember him as an inspiration and as a true friend. During his years with the Hallé, Maurice conducted many great choral performances, such as Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius,* Delius's *A Mass of Life,* Orff's *Carmina Burana* and Penderecki's *St Luke Passion.* His *rapport* with the Choir, and their response, was remarkable. Always a demanding taskmaster, his directions are nevertheless remembered with affection and humour. He would say, 'Watch me, I assure you I *can* help you'. Of the Choir's singing in *Carmina Burana,* 'you sound too Methodist!'. After about five minutes of intensive rehearsal of any piece, 'Right, excellent singing, time for a ciggy'. In the complexities of establishing one's line in the Penderecki he would say, 'Insist, my dears, insist upon your line, insist!' These and many more have since become catch-phrases in the Choir.

Clarity of direction and inspiration were the hallmarks of Maurice's conducting. Loyalty was the mark of his friendship. For example, in 1983, a section of the Choir, conducted by Maurice, should have toured to Hong Kong, but a dubious travel agent let us down. We were threatened with serious legal action by the Hong Kong Government for non-appearance. To avoid this, come what may, we had to commit ourselves to fulfil the visit in 1984. In 1983, at the height of the crisis, Maurice told me that he had cancer. In spite of this he said to me 'Don't worry, I will be there with you in Hong Kong next year, I won't let you down', and in 1984, although in great pain, he was as good as his word.

Maurice never claimed to be religious, but he was fired by the religious choral works which he conducted, especially those of Elgar. The words of the lesson (Acts ii 14–21 abridged) quoted in Elgar's *The Kingdom* he repeated many times to me. *The Kingdom* was his last big Free Trade Hall concert with the Choir. The chorus 'O ye priests' describes God working through the disciples. It contains the lines 'It is not ye who speak'. Perhaps, although Maurice might not acknowledge it, God spoke through him in the inspiration and loyal friendship he gave to those of us who knew him and made music with him.

Robin Golding

Sir Thomas Armstrong's tribute was intended for inclusion in *The Times,* but was not reproduced there in full. Those by Martin Milner, Leader of the Hallé Orchestra, and William Golightly, Chairman of the Hallé Choir, were spoken at the memorial Service in St Ann's Church, Manchester, on 23 February.

Some more facts should be recorded. Maurice Handford was born in Salisbury on 29 April 1928, went to Bishop Wordsworth's School there, and studied the horn at the Academy (where he won the E F James Scholarship and the Walter Stokes Scholarship) with Aubrey Brain between 1946 and 1948, and served in the RAF Central Band. He joined the Hallé Orchestra as principal horn in 1949, and held the position until 1961, when he relinquished it in order to devote all his time to conducting (in 1954 he had formed the Manchester Wind Ensemble, and in May 1960 he made his début as a conductor with the Hallé in the Free Trade Hall, with Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique*). In 1963 he was appointed Associate Conductor to Sir John Barbirolli, and during the next eight years he covered a wide repertory (Elgar, Vaughan Williams, Orff, Strauss, Messiaen, Schönberg, Lutoslawski, Penderecki, Mahler, Bruckner) as well as conducting many new works in the Hallé/SPNM New Music Series. He conducted *The Dream of Gerontius* at the Memorial Concert for Barbirolli in 1970. He was for many years closely associated with the CBSO, was Musical Director and Principal Conductor of the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra from 1971 to 1975, and was Principal Guest Conductor of the State Orchestra of Cluj in Romania. He was elected ARAM in 1952 and FRAM in 1962.

When Sir Thomas Armstrong asked Barbirolli to take over the Academy's First Orchestra in September 1961, after Clarence Raybould's retirement, Barbirolli only agreed on condition that Maurice should be his Associate. Although JB (whom Maurice adored, and whose voice he could imitate better than anybody) took a number of rehearsals and conducted some memorable concerts, the bulk of the work fell to Maurice, and all of it, of course, after Barbirolli's death in 1970. In his twenty-five years with the First (subsequently Symphony) Orchestra, Maurice must have taken some 1,500 rehearsals and conducted close on a hundred concerts. I worked with him constantly throughout those years, helping him to plan programmes for rehearsals and concerts, and we became very close friends. Martin Milner and I were two of the four godfathers Maurice chose for his son Nicholas, by his second wife Daphne, and the warmth of the hospitality that was offered to their many friends after the christening in Salisbury Cathedral in July 1978 was typical of the generous and gentle private Maurice beneath the often rather forbidding exterior.

On a point of professional principle or etiquette he could be stubborn to the point of obstinacy, and his sometimes blunt platform manner in rehearsal did not always endear him to colleagues (he treated Academy students as professionals), yet you have only to ask any seasoned orchestral musician who learned his craft under Maurice Handford to discover how highly he was revered as an orchestral trainer. It is greatly to be regretted that he never had a full-time professional orchestra of his own, but in a sense the students at the RAM reaped the benefit, for over the years the Academy orchestra became his first priority: the fact that he gave his last concert with it on 4 December, twelve days before his death, was absolutely in character.

Priaulx Rainier
1903–86

Peter Gellhorn

When a great musical mind departs, a sense of loss and loneliness comes over us all. Fifty years ago I was working with Orrea Pernel, the distinguished violinist, who said one day that a friend of hers would come and listen to our rehearsal. This is how I met Priaulx Rainier. She did indeed listen, and it seemed she heard everything, not only what was right or wrong, but why it was so. She judged the motive as well as the action; in the end one felt that she knew all about you by hearing you play.

Since that day I have, over many years, experienced the most extraordinary manifestations of that phenomenal ear. One day she was directing the recording of a film score she had written, in preparation of which she had come to me to discuss problems of conducting. During a play-back one of the studio engineers said that there was a sound he could not trace as it did not seem to

appear in the score. Priaulx said 'Yes, it is a bubbling water pipe in the wall over there.' It was easy to submit to her criticism without any ill feeling, as it was given in a quiet, matter-of-fact manner without any personal accent, not so much an opinion as a reminder of what we knew to be true. Once I said to her: 'Priaulx, when I come to see you I feel I have to do some practising first, even if I am not going to play, just to be in the right frame of mind.'

Yet there was nothing academic or professorial about her. Her utterances were spontaneous and disciplined at the same time, like her music. Neither did she live in an ivory tower; she was always acutely conscious of her friends and their problems, of people in general and of the world at large, being truly 'involved in mankind', and accordingly elated or depressed by the events of the day. How fortunate we were to know this rare person!

Joyce Rathbone

Priaulx's name first came to my ears through Janet Craxton, with whom I arrived at the RAM in 1945, as an extremely young and green student. I wasn't at all sure what to expect from my own 'harmony' teacher but, from what Janet told me of her lessons with Priaulx, I realised that harmony teachers must come in extraordinarily varied guises. It was unthinkable that mine would be amused by Janet's notion that she was writing serial music since it arrived in instalments—of one bar per week!

Three years later, somewhat less green and deeply frustrated by the difficulty piano students had in being taken seriously as chamber music players, I finally met Priaulx at the first Bryanston Summer School (forerunner of Dartington) and enrolled myself in her chamber music class. There were very few groups in the first week—perhaps ours was the only one—and Priaulx had plenty of time on her hands. She coached me intensively (and, it sometimes seemed, endlessly), once reducing me to tears when her relentless criticism combined too powerfully with acute toothache! It was the kind of criticism to which I had never before been subjected but I recognised it immediately as what I had been longing for. So many decades later, it is difficult to be certain that I am not imposing subsequent discussions on my memory of those sessions. However, my recollection of the performance which emerged makes me think that rhythmic considerations occupied more place than even the refinements of dynamic nuance which were so important to her. Certainly this experience was one of many life-changing revelations which made that particular summer school a watershed in my musical life and, for me, probably the most important, because it led to my joining Priaulx's 'harmony' class at the RAM in my final year and therefore to my being exposed consistently to the rigorous criteria which she applied to all musical matters.

The short period which Priaulx spent in Paris studying with Nadia Boulanger must have been a very strong influence on her, as was made obvious to me when Boulanger subsequently came and took a class at Bryanston. As musicans and as teachers they were, of course, very unalike in many ways but, in the stringency of the demands which they made on their students and in certain attitudes to rhythm and phrasing, the lineage was a clear one.

Priaulx took her role as teacher very seriously, somewhat to the discomforture of my piano professor, who always noticed when I had been playing my piano pieces to my harmony professor! He made dry but kindly remarks to the effect that there were suddenly too many feminine endings to my phrases. In

retrospect, and after much subsequent experience of Priaulx's views on classical phrasing, I'm inclined to think that he was not reacting to musical matters, rather playing with words to let me know that he had discovered what was going on and to express his understandable but unjustified pique. If only more students studied their works with composers! Anyway, for all that her speaking voice was unusually quiet and gentle, her musical persona was quite otherwise, and in her own music, as well as in the classics, she encouraged vitality and ardent playing above everything. She railed, in explosive whispers, against those who accented senselessly, realising that misplaced accents are as destructive of vitality as correctly placed ones are conducive to it.

I have no idea what Priaulx's 'harmony' lessons were like, having arrived rather late on the scene with harmony exams well behind me, but I'm sure that she expected every student to compose something more than harmony exercises.

Like all the most effective teachers, Priaulx combined her often devastating criticism with a constant flow of warm encouragement. If one were tough enough to stand the barrage, one was buoyed up by the oracular statements of belief in one's ability! If any student rang her up when she was 'in the middle of a bar', that student was given short shrift, but she was endlessly generous with her time and endeavours on our behalves. She was an exceptional musician who saw every sphere of music and life as her concern. Above all, she combined a fervent interest in fresh thoughts with a passion for the genuine, and it was these characteristics which had such a strong influence on her students, recognised by them with much affectionate gratitude.

(The attention of readers is drawn to Timothy Baxter's article *The music of Priaulx Rainier* in the Spring 1983 issue of the *Magazine*—Ed.)

Letter to the Editor

Dear Sir,

In December 1986, while I was still a student at the RAM, I started a music agency, an agency with a difference, specialising in providing a complete, professional musical service for the home. The music provided could be for private parties, weddings, anniversaries and private entertainments at your home or other selected venue. I am concentrating on the smaller, more intimate ensemble groups (from two to five musicians) and on solo performers. The programming for the concert will be done in conjunction with the clients, providing quality programmes suited to their exact requirements. A printed souvenir programme completes the service. By keeping an updated record of current repertories for a wide variety of musicians I can offer a good selection of ensembles and a wide range of music for the discerning client.

It is deplorable that there are not more performance opportunities for instrumentalists and vocalists. Many young musicians work up a sizeable repertory for only one or two performances! I believe that the concerts I have outlined are another way to attain valuable performance experience and for a realistic fee. By bringing together a variety of people requiring live music with the best of our young, creative musical performers I believe 'Taylor-Made Music' will satisfy a real need today.

I would be very happy to give more information about my business, to answer any questions and to give a quotation.

25 Shirlock Road,
London NW3 2HR

Yours faithfully,
Julian Taylor

Notes about Members and others

Dame Eva Turner celebrated her ninety-fifth birthday on 10 March, and was the subject of an interview with Sue MacGregor in the evening of the same day on Radio 4, when she spoke about her long and distinguished operatic career. On 30 November last year she was a guest of honour at the Teatro Ghione in Rome (which is run by Christopher Axworthy and his wife Ileana Ghione) and was interviewed by Michael Aspinall.

Paul Patterson, who is forty on 15 June, was the subject of a Fortieth Birthday Concert in the Queen Elizabeth Hall on 10 February. Aquarius was conducted by Nicholas Cleobury and the London Chorale was conducted by David Coleman. Works performed were *Duologue, At the still point of the turning world, Missa Brevis, Rebecca, Intersections, Spare Parts,* and *Cracowian Counterpoints,* and the concert ended with a sequence of short birthday tributes composed by Nigel Clarke, Alun Hoddinott, Joseph Horovitz, Sidika Ozdil, Krzysztof Penderecki, Alan Ridout, Edwin Roxburgh and Giles Swayne. After this Mr Patterson was presented with a Medal of Honour from the Polish Ministry of Culture, for services to Polish music. The Royal Danish Orchestra gave nine performances of his *Upside-Down Variations* on their recent tour of Australia, and the Berlin State Orchestra gave a live television broadcast of it for Australia's Channel 9 in Perth. In Norway the Oslo Radio Orchestra televised his *Stabat Mater* live from the Christiansand Festival, and Polish Television's documentary film about him was shown early this year in Poland. At home, Border Television have recently made a film of his ballet *Having a Ball.*

Edward McGuire's *Pipes of Peace,* a new work for chorus accompanied by three different types of bagpipes, was premièred by the eighty-strong Scottish National Orchestra Chorus in Jerusalem at the New Year. It will be repeated at the Musica Nova Festival in Glasgow in September.

Jonathan Miller's production of Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Mikado* for ENO at the London Coliseum, first seen on 29 September, had strong RAM representation in the cast, with Richard Angas as the Mikado, Bonaventura Bottone as Nanki-Poo, Lesley Garrett as Yum-Yum, Susan Bullock as Peep-Bo, and Jean Rigby as Pitti-Sing; the conductor was Peter Robinson.

Roger Steptoe's concerto for tuba and strings was given its first performance on 27 October in St John's, Smith Square, by James Gourlay and Terra Nova under Neil Thomson.

Henry Cummings celebrated his eightieth birthday on 22 December, and the BBC marked the event by broadcasting his recording of 'My old tunes' from Elgar's incidental music for Algernon Blackwood's *Starlight Express.*

Peter Bronder sang Arturo in the Welsh National Opera's production of Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor,* conducted by Julian Smith, and repeated it at Covent Garden on 23 December, under Michelangelo Veltri.

Betty Roe's new chamber opera *A Canterbury Tale,* with libretto by Ursula Vaughan Williams, commissioned by East Midlands Opera, had its first performance in Oakham in October.

Timothy de Quetteville gave his London début recital at the Wigmore Hall on 2 February, in a programme of Beethoven, Chopin, Ireland, Scriabin and Liszt.

Sidonie Winter sang the contralto solos in a '*Messiah* from scratch' conducted by Sir David Willcocks in the Royal Albert Hall on 5 December.

Distinctions

Knight Bachelor
Peter Maxwell Davies, CBE, Mus B (Manchester), Hon D Mus (Edinburgh), Hon RAM, FRNCM
CBE
Simon Rattle, Hon D Mus (Birmingham), FRAM
OBE
Graham Collier; Derek Hammond Stroud, Hon RAM, Hon FTCL
MBE
Margaret Hubicki, FRAM, FRSA
FRCM
Simon Preston, MA, Mus B (Cantab), FRAM, Hon FRCO

Births

Childs: to Alan and Elizabeth Childs (*née* Lee) a son, Dominic Andrew Lashly, 5 January 1987
Milner: to Martin and Diana Milner (*née* Wanklyn) a son, Henry Felix, 29 April 1986
Norris: to David Owen and Fiona Norris (*née* Clarke) a son, Barnaby William, 7 January 1987
Wedderburn: to Robin and Hazel Wedderburn (*née* Ifor-Jones) a son, Alister, 16 January 1987

Marriage

Green–Adams: Malcolm Green to Sally Diana Adams, 29 August 1986

Deaths

Reginald Barker, Hon ARAM, 1 January 1987
Godfrey James Barton, August 1986
Frederick Grinke, CBE, FRAM, 16 March 1987
Simon Lawman, 20 December 1986
Gerald Moore, CBE, Hon RAM, FRCM
L Gurney Parrott, Hon FRAM, 1 March 1987
Dorothy Pattison, FRAM, 16 January 1987
Sir George Thalben-Ball, CBE, D Mus (Cantuar), Hon D Mus (Birmingham), Hon RAM, FRCO, FRCM, FRSA, FRSCM

RAM Awards

LRAM Diploma, December 1986
Piano (Teachers') Marion Brister, Chloe Green, Miranda Phythian-Adams, Susan Spicer, Yuki Yamashita
Singing (Teachers') Helen Marriott
Violin (Teachers') Andrew Beazley, Catherine Browning, Clare March, Susan Spicer, Lynette Wynn
Viola (Teachers') Richard Roper, Dominic Wyse
Cello (Teachers') Marion Long
Double Bass (Teachers') Steven McManus, Geraldine Warner
Flute (Teachers') Alicia Dine, Francesca Hanley, Elliott Ware
Oboe (Teachers') Peter Tompkins
Clarinet (Teachers') John Durant, Nigel Hinson

RAM Club News

Mark Wildman

The Annual General Meeting of the RAM Club was held on Monday 10 November 1986 at 7 pm in the Barbirolli Room at the Academy. The President, Sir David Lumsden, took the Chair. The Committee's report was presented by the Honorary Secretary, Jeffery Harris, and the Balance Sheet was presented and briefly explained by the Honorary Treasurer, Christopher Regan. The annual election of officers was the first following the revision of the Club's rules. Officers were elected as follows:

President Florence Hooton
Vice-President Sir David Lumsden
President Elect Ruth Harte
Honorary Secretary Mark Wildman
Honorary Assistant Secretary Jean Harvey
Honorary Assistant Treasurer Richard Steele
Auditors Gane, Jackson & Scott

Four committee members were elected by the meeting: Diana Cummings, Margaret Hubicki, Lady Lewis and Jonathan Plowright. For the first time two student members were also elected: Sidonie Winter and David Ashman. Bridget Campbell and Jeffery Harris were co-opted to the committee. The meeting closed with a warm expression of thanks by the President to Sir David Lumsden for his untiring efforts on behalf of the Club during his year of office.

The committee would like to acknowledge its great debt of gratitude to those officers and members of the committee who retired at the AGM: Sir David Lumsden (President); Jeffery Harris (Honorary Secretary); Bridget Campbell (Honorary Assistant Secretary); Jean Cox, Georgina Dobrée, Fiona Cameron and Graeme Humphrey. In a wide variety of different ways they each made a most valuable contribution to the functioning and well-being of the Club.

Those members who attended the AGM and the concert afterwards were indeed fortunate to hear one of the Academy's most distinguished former students, Moura Lympany, give a recital of rare beauty and sensitivity. Miss Lympany's hectic international schedule is, of course, well known, so it was with especial pleasure that the club welcomed her to the RAM in celebration of her seventieth birthday. The recital was followed by a buffet supper in the Concert Room, at which the President spoke in the warmest terms expressing the Club's admiration and gratitude to Miss Lympany.

The committee and both its sub-committees have met regularly to transact the business of the Club. The committee is delighted to announce that Her Royal Highness The Princess of Wales has accepted the Club's invitation to be President for the centenary season, 1988–9. The plans for the centenary season will be made during the coming months. The Hon Secretary would be glad to hear from any members who may have any suggestions or ideas that they would like to be considered for inclusion in the Programme of Events for this important season.

By now all members should have received a copy of the rules as revised in 1986, together with a membership card and a Programme of Events for the season. It is very much hoped that this advance notice of events will be helpful to members as they plan their diaries. The committee has received a number of requests for social functions to be held at weekends. It is unfortunate that at present this is not possible. However, these representations will be borne in mind.

The provision of refreshments at the social meetings has been discussed by the committee on several occasions. It has been decided, experimentally, to arrange for some social events to be free of charge both to members and their guests and either to dispense with the provision of refreshments or have drinks available for purchase on a cash basis. The subscription does not cover the ever-increasing cost of refreshments or the incidental expenses incurred in the provision thereof. In view of a certain feeling that has been expressed regarding the charges for some events (and value for money, or lack of it), it was felt that the time had come to experiment, to test opinion and to consider the situation regularly, always mindful of the desires and intentions of the membership—and always equally mindful that it is rarely possible to please all the people all the time!

The Annual Dinner will again take place in the Duke's Hall on Monday 22 June 1987 at 7 pm. This will almost certainly be the last occasion on which we will dine in the Duke's Hall as we know it. Particular efforts are being made by the committee and Mrs Langdon to ensure that the queue for food will be a thing of the past. In recent years the Dinner has been a deservedly popular event. It would again be good to see the Duke's Hall full for this occasion.

The committee is pleased to announce that Alfred Brendel has accepted honorary membership of the Club. The committee is equally pleased to see the continuing increase in membership. Nine new members were elected at the committee meeting on 3 March.

Alterations and additions to List of Members

Bowley, Richard, *Ethel Kennedy Jacobs House, 23 Champion Hill, SE5*
Burton, Mrs Pamela, *5 Bridge Road, Mońayfield, Australia 4506*
Fairbairn, Michael, *Ethel Kennedy Jacobs House, 23 Champion Hill, SE5*
Hardwick, Mrs Susan, *1 Goulders Cottages, Cockpole Green, Near Wargrave, Berkshire*
Harvey, Martin, *10 Blythe Hill Lane, SE6 4UH*
Hinchcliffe, Kathleen M, *'Dorimar', Meadway, Beckenham, Kent, BR3 2NX*
Ingrams, Mrs N (*née* Annesley), *24 Lindsey Road, Uffington, Stamford, Lincolnshire*
Knox, Richard A, *Oak Glen, 20 Tower Road, Saltaire, Shipley, West Yorkshire*
Mander, Richard L, *Ethel Kennedy Jacobs House, 23 Champion Hill, SE5*
McLean-Mair, Kevin, *27 Minster Yard, Lincoln, Lincolnshire LN2 1PY*
McSherry, Clare, *Ethel Kennedy Jacobs House, 23 Champion Hill, SE5*
Morris, Stephen, *Ethel Kennedy Jacobs House, 23 Champion Hill, SE5*
Platt, David L, *Ethel Kennedy Jacobs House, 23 Champion Hill, SE5*
Vass, George, *17 Parliament Hill, NW3 2TA*
Ware, John M, *3 Meeting Lane, Lympstone, Exmouth, Devon, EX8 5HS*
Woolf, Mrs Felicity (*née* Lott), *Monksdown House, Bishopstone, East Sussex, BN25 2UD*

RAM Orchestral Concerts

Autumn Term

Symphony Orchestra
4 December
Shostakovich Festive Overture, Op 96
Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No 1 in B flat minor, Op 23
Vaughan Williams A London Symphony
Conductor Maurice Handford
Soloist Jung-Won Chae
Leader Jayne E Harris

Sinfonia
3 November
Stravinsky Concerto in E flat ('Dumbarton Oaks')
Strauss Horn Concerto No 1 in E flat, Op 11
Daniel Börtz October Music for strings (1978)
Beethoven Symphony No 1 in C, Op 21
Conductor James Judd
Soloist Richard Clews
Leader Rosalind Butler

Choral Concert (Sinfonia and Choir)
28 November
Haydn 'The Creation'
Conductor Peter James
Soloists Nancy Yuen, Clara Miller (sopranos), Arwel Morgan (tenor), Andrew Forbes, Charles Gibbs (bass)
Leader Rosalind Butler
Harpsichord Jonathan Papp

Repertory Orchestra
13 November
Glinka Overture 'Ruslan and Ludmilla'
Walton Viola Concerto
Sibelius Symphony No 5 in E flat, Op 82
Conductor Colin Metters
Soloist Christopher Yates (viola)
Leader Miranda Dale

Opera

Opera Orchestra and Chorus
16 November ('Opera Singalong' in the Barbican Centre)
Johann Strauss II 'Die Fledermaus': Overture
Berlioz 'Les Troyens': 'Gloire à Didon'
Saint-Saëns 'Samson et Dalila': 'Mon coeur s'ouvre à ta voix'
Bizet 'Carmen': Habanera
Wolf-Ferrari 'I quattro rusteghi': Intermezzo
Gounod 'Faust': 'Gloire immortelle'
Mozart 'Don Giovanni': 'Madamina, il catalogo questo'
Verdi 'La traviata': 'Libiamo'
Rossini 'L'italiana in Algeri': Overture
Verdi 'Macbeth': 'Ah! la paterna mano'
Verdi 'Il trovatore': 'Verdi! le fosche notturne spoglie'
Delibes 'Lakmé': 'Sous le dôme épais'
Puccini 'Manon Lescaut': Intermezzo
Verdi 'Nabucco': 'Va, pensiero'
Mozart 'Così fan tutte': 'Soave sia il vento'
Verdi 'Aida': 'Gloria all'Egitto'
Conductor Nicholas Cleobury
Soloists Joy Mammen (soprano), Jean Rigby (mezzo-soprano), David Johnston (tenor), Derek Hammond-Stroud (baritone)
Leader Sarah White

A showing of 'Work in Progress on Opera scenes' was staged in the Sir Jack Lyons Theatre on 5 and 7 November; Director of Opera Norman Ayrton, Conductors Nicholas Cleobury, Nicholas Wilks, Pianists Robert Keane, Mark Wigglesworth, Mary Nash, Patricia Smith, John Shea, Costumes Margaret Adams, Stage Manager Annie Derryie. Items included:
Delibes 'Lakmé'
Nancy Yuen, Gemma Carruthers, Philippa Daly, Sidonie Winter, Gaynor Keeble, Christopher Ventris, Andrew Mayor

Members of the Academy's Opera Chorus ready for the Barbican 'Singalong' on the main staircase of the RAM
Photograph by Dave Hogan for the Telegraph Sunday Magazine

Britten 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'
Colin Cree, Sonja Van Rensburg, Adrian Parsons
Barber 'Vanessa'
David Ashman, Christopher Ventris, Caroline Taylor, Susan Parry, Amanda Lob, Annie Deery
Massenet 'Don Quichotte'
Nicolas Cavallier, John Archer, Joanne Rondel
Strauss 'Arabella'
Nicholas Hills, Sara Jefferies, Helen Astrid, Dawn Williamson
Rossini 'La Cenerentola'
Charles Gibbs, Clara Miller, Amanda Lob, Andrew Forbes, Medwyn Williams, Denise Hector

A member of the Junior Academy, Rose Isaacson, aged ten
Photograph by Suzie E Maeder